(c) and (d) The distribution of funds for maintenance of National Highways including Ahmedabad-Bombay section of National Highway No. 8 is made by the States out of the allocations indicated above keeping in view the actual requirements.

Steps to improve the functioning of the Calcutta port

854. SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the navigational conditions between Calcutta Port and Haldia Port are deteriorating fast;

(b) if so, what specific steps have so far been taken to improve the navigational conditions between Calcutta and Haldia; and

(c) what other steps have so far been taken to improve the general functioning of the Calcutta Port to make it competitive with other Ports like Bombay and Madras?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) River Training Works like guidewall, Groynes etc. have been executed and regular maintenance dredging is being undertaken to improve the navigational conditions between Calcutta and Haldia.

(c) A number of schemes for the replacement of old assets like floating crafts handling equipments etc. and for modernisation and augmentation of existing facilities have been included in the 8th Plan to improve the general functioning of the Calcutta Port.

Extra payment made by Shipping Corporation of India

855. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the Economic Times dated 14th June, 1993 captioned "Shipping Corporation of India to pay Dollar 20 million more than market rates for four tankers";

(b) whether any delegation of officials visited South Korea to talk to the concerned shipyards;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Minister also met the Shipyard officials;

(d) if so, what are the details of discussions;

(e) whether an enquiry will be ordered into this huge foreign exchange loss of Shipping Corporation of India; and

(f) whethre it will be possible to negotiate a downward revision of the prices of there ships.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) No, Sir. However, Minister of State for Transport alongwith some officials visited South Korea for other purposes which were not connected with the construction of four tankers.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Minister met shipyard personnel in connection with the proposed collaboration arrangement with the Indian Shipyards.

(e) No, Sir. The Shipping Corporation of India placing orders for the construction of four tankers at the rate of US $ 65.53 Million per vessel was quite in order. Government has, therefore, not considered it necessary to hold any enquiry in the matter.

(f) No, Sir.

Steps to reduce road accidents in Delhi

856. SHRI MAHENDER PRASAD: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the spurt in road accidents in the capital since the